REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 16-19, and 21-96 are pending, with Claims 1-11 and 23-96 being withdrawn from consideration. Of the claims under consideration (Claims 12-14, 16-19, 21, and 22) Claims 12, 17, and 22 are independent. In this Amendment, Claims 12, 17, and 22 have been amended.

Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment as it is an earnest effort to advance prosecution and place the claims in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that entry of this Amendment is appropriate under 37 CFR § 1.116, as it is believed to place the application in condition for allowance, or at least to place the claims in better form for consideration on appeal. Applicants submit that the amendments presented herein were not presented earlier because Applicants believed the claims, as then presented, were in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

In view of the amendments above and the remarks below, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Applicants have amended the specification to address minor informalities noted therein. No new matter has been added.

In the Office Action mailed January 13, 2005, Claims 12-15, 17-19, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,567,427 (Suzuki) in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0000962 (Rajan).

Without conceding the propriety of the rejection, and to advance prosecution, Applicants have amended independent Claims 12, 17, and 22 to even more clearly recite their patentable features. At least as amended, Applicants submit that Claims 12, 17, and 22 are patentably distinguishable from Suzuki and Rajan, taken singly or in combination.

Specifically, independent Claim 12 relates to a receiving apparatus. The apparatus includes a receiver, a first and second decoders, a character generator, a setter, and a synthesizer. The receiver is arranged to receive a bit stream, wherein the bit stream is multiplexed image data encoded by MPEG 4, image data and/or sound data encoded by another coding format, and system data. The first decoder is arranged to decode the image data encoded by MPEG 4. The second decoder is arranged to decode the image data and/or sound data encoded by the other coding format. The character generator is arranged to generate character data for display in accordance with the received system data. The setter is arranged to set a layout of images represented by a plurality of image data, which are decoded by the first and second decoders, and the generated character data, in accordance with the coding formats of the received image and/or sound data. The synthesizer is arranged to synthesize the plurality of image data and/or sound data decoded by the first and second decoders and the generated character data, in accordance with the layout.

Independent Claim 17 is directed to a receiving method including steps performing functions parallel to the operation performed by the features recited in independent Claim 12. Likewise, independent Claim 22 is directed to a computer program product stored in a computer readable medium including a computer program code for a

receiving method including steps corresponding to those recited for the method of Claim 17.

With the features recited in Applicants' independent claims, as discussed above, the invention can synthesize a character in accordance with the received system data on the decoded image. For example, as shown in Figure 23, characters for displaying a time indication image 103, and a weather forecast image 104 are generated from the system data, as described at pages 57-59 of the specification.

Applicants submit that neither Suzuki nor Rajan, taken singly or in combination, teaches or suggests the features recited in Applicants' independent claims. Suzuki, directed to an image signal multiplexing apparatus, and Rajan, directed to composing and presenting multimedia video programs, in Applicants' understanding, fail to teach receiving a bit stream which is multiplexed MPEG 4 data, image data and/or sound data encoded by another coding format, and system data or character data generated in accordance with the system data. In addition, Applicants submit that Suzuki and Rajan fail to teach or suggest generating character data in accordance with the system data, setting a layout of images represented by a plurality of image data and the character data, and synthesizing the plurality of image data and/or sound data and the character data, in accordance with the layout.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent Claims 12, 17, and 22 are patentably distinguishable over Suzuki, taken singly or in combination with Rajan.

Applicants further submit that the dependent claims are patentably distinguishable from the cited art for at least the reasons discussed above for their respective base claims. In addition, Applicants submit that the dependent claims recite additional features further distinguishing them from the cited art, and respectfully request individual consideration of each dependent claim.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Entry of this Amendment, and favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of this application, are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C., office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address below.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne M. Maher

Attorney for Applicants
Anne M. Maher
Registration No. 38,231

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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